

House of Representative and Chair Rachel Prusak
House Committee on Health Care
900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97301

April 5, 2021

SUBJECT: Support on HB 3231 (Oregon Sign Language Interpreter Licensure)

Dear the Honorable Chair Prusak, Vice-Chair Hayden, Vice-Chair Salinas, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Steven M Brown, and I am writing this letter in support from my personal position. I urge you to vote “**aye**” with the “**to-do**” **pass recommendation** for the following reasons below.

1. Some unqualified sign language interpreters need to realize they need to take their professions very seriously because too often I am experienced some kind of translational errors in which puts me in a position where I am embarrassed or even worse humiliated – simply because of interpreters’ translational errors.
2. While the National Interpreting Certification (NIC) provides the best quality of interpreting assessments administrated by National Regional Interpreting for the Deaf (RID), RID requires all sign language interpreters be NIC certified, but with at least an undergraduate degree and the experiences in the field of specialized interpreting scope of work. I urge this State of Oregon provides the best expectation of the professionalism from all sign language interpreters.
3. Many states in the United States do establish a state licensure requirement in recent years so that the interpreters be abided with such code of ethics, as well as with new NIC requirements that RID just established 5 or more years ago. I urge this State of Oregon does the same.
4. In some circumstances of work that sign language interpreters do with their customers, there are sometimes serious errors that could have put their customers in danger of losing their lives (medical), losing their jobs (employment), and/or sentencing in prisons (criminal) because of misinterpretations with their attorneys or with the judges. There are so many instances where such errors can be prevented especially with higher standards of expectations from the sign language interpreters in placed – that is, it means higher accountability from interpreters.
5. I personally believe establishing a state board in licensing of sign language interpreters will keep their professions top-notch training and experiences, as well as supervisions and endorsement requirements. Requiring interpreters be insured for malpractices would be a good start. Providing continuing education requirements would be helpful for interpreters to improve their interpreting skills at times. Check and balance on complaints from the customers will provide them a fair and due process of law. Please place those examples of safeguards in licensing the interpreters for the sake of their safety and professions, as well as for the customers’.

Thank you for reading my personal support in this legislation.

Sincerely,

Steven M Brown, MA, LMHC, LPC, NCC
2314 SE Brooklyn Street
Portland, OR 97202